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**Taking Part: Future of the survey**

**User engagement**

**July 2015**


# **1 Introduction**

The Taking Part survey is England’s survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport and is jointly funded by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and its Arm’s Length Body (ALB) partners: Arts Council England, Sport England and Historic England.

DCMS is responsible for government policy on: the arts, broadcasting, culture, the creative industries, the historic environment, licensing and gambling, libraries, museums and galleries, archives, the National Lottery, press freedom and regulation, sport, tourism, media, telecoms and broadband provision.

Since it was first commissioned in 2005, the Taking Part Survey has provided data to help DCMS and others develop an understanding of engagement across the culture[[1]](#footnote-1) and sport sectors, providing strong evidence on the drivers and barriers to engagement within these sectors.

The survey has now been going ten years and over this time the survey has developed significantly, including the additional of child data, new questions and a longitudinal element to the survey.

DCMS is now taking the opportunity to review the survey content and approach with two main objectives:

1. Increase impact – ensure the survey is meeting user needs and being used to its full potential.
2. Reduce costs – ensure the survey remains sustainable in the future.

DCMS is inviting user input into these developments, and welcomes responses to the questions set out in section 5 by 16 October 2015.

# **2 Background to the survey:**

The Taking Part survey was first commissioned in 2005 to provide data for the measurement of the department’s aims to increase participation in culture and sport among priority groups. It was set up as a face-to-face household survey in England initially providing responses from 28,000 adults, aged 16 and over. An additional questionnaire for children aged 11-15 was added in 2006.

In 2008 questions for children aged 5-10 (to be answered by proxy by the adult respondent) were included in the survey. Together with Communities and Local Government, DCMS shared a government aim to build more cohesive, empowered and active communities. DCMS provided data on the percentage of people who participate in culture or sport to measure this aim.

For 2012/13 a longitudinal element was added to the survey, to track respondents’ behaviour over a number of years. Results over 4 years are now being analysed for the first time.

To achieve the aim of a single measure of sport, it was agreed that the Active People Survey (APS), commissioned by Sport England, should lead on publishing adult participation in sport from 2013 onwards as the local element was important. DCMS continue to collect, but no longer publish, face-to-face adult sport data from Taking Part, and provide the output to Sport England to validate their telephone survey results. Longer-term, these face-to-face results from Taking Part may be integrated within Sport England survey results, depending on ongoing sports survey data collection modernisation. Taking Part continues to publish child results for sport and it the only national source as APS does not cover children. The survey provides a substantial depth of information on those who do, and do not, participate in our sectors, as well as investigating the barriers to participation.

The results are used widely across the department and by ALB co-funders (Arts Council England, Sport England and Historic England). Taking Part results form key parts of the evidence presented to HM Treasury during fiscal events and Spending Rounds, providing credible data which HM Treasury use in their models. Results are also used by other government departments, such as the Department for Education who are using the survey to measure child participation in sports at school. Wider users include academics and researchers in the private and third sectors and policymakers and practitioners across arts and sport.

# **3 General Information:**

## 3.1Purpose

DCMS invites users’ views on proposals for the future of the Taking Part survey. Views are sought on the questions set out in Section 5 of this paper. More general comments may also be provided.

Issued: 23rd July 2015

Respond by: 16th October 2015

3.2 How to respond

Please email responses and queries to: takingpart@culture.gov.uk

Or by post to:

Taking Part

Evidence and Analysis Unit

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

4th Floor

100 Parliament Street

LONDON

SW1A 2BQ

When responding please say if you are an academic institution, Government organisation, business individual or representative body.

## 3.3 Additional Copies

This document can be accessed from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/taking-part>

You may make copies of this document without seeking permission.

## 3.4 Confidentiality and data protection

Information provided in responses, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information legislation General information 6 (primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential please say so clearly in writing when you send your response. It would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded by us as a confidentiality request.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on the [Taking Part pages of GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/taking-part). This summary will include a list of names or organisations that responded but not people’s personal names, addresses or other contact details.

# **4 Proposals:**

## 4.1 Summary

## DCMS is requesting views on changes or potential changes to the Taking Part survey covering the following areas:

## Questionnaire content

* Potential for use of rotating modules
* Reduction in sample size
* Online data collection
* Frequency of returning to longitudinal sample
* Data linking and administrative data
* Analysis and dissemination

## 4.2 Questionnaire content

The questionnaire content for Taking Part was decided when the survey first started in 2005 and since then there have been many additions to the questionnaire[[2]](#footnote-2), with few questions being removed. This means each face to face interview now takes longer to complete, which has an impact on response rates and increases costs. It is also likely that questions which were originally included in the survey are no longer the top priority questions for DCMS or other users. For example, as a result of changes in the culture and sport landscapes, new evidence from other sources or changes to DCMS responsibilities. Therefore DCMS is reviewing the entire questionnaire content to see where changes should be made.

Annex A sets out a small number of questions that will remain in the survey and do not form part of this review. All other questionnaire content will be determined on the basis of this consultation along with the requirements of the survey funders to monitor and evaluate policy. The criteria used to evaluate priorities for questionnaire content are:

* User need – is there an identified user need and how strong is it?
* Relevance – is the content relevant to DCMS sectors and priorities?
* Duplication - is there a suitable alternative source for the information?
* Multivariate analysis - is the potential of the data collected enhanced by the ability to undertake analysis alongside other topics in the survey?
* Continuity – consistency with previous questions to enable comparisons over time?
* Data quality – can the data be collected accurately through survey questions?
* Compatibility – can questions be converted for online data collection?
* Harmonisation – are categories in the question consistent with other similar surveys or government data collection standard questions?

Questions on demographics will be decided in collaboration with the survey contractors using harmonised questions, but views are welcomed on demographic information users believe to be important. Questions on Sport will as far as possible be harmonised with Sport England survey questions, but if there are areas where Taking Part can provide unique insights not otherwise available, then these questions will be considered.

In total the adult face to face questionnaire should not exceed 40 minutes.

Users are asked to submit details of their priorities for future survey in response to the questions outlined in section 5 bearing in mind the evaluation criteria set out above.

**Questions**

1. Which topics in the current survey are most important?

2. Are there any gaps in the topics covered in the current survey?

3. Are there any areas which you feel can be dropped from Taking Part because

 a) the data are available elsewhere?

 b) the data are no longer relevant?

4. Are there any areas which would benefit from harmonising questions with other surveys?

5. If you have views on questions in the current survey which should be kept or new questions which should be added please provide details of your priorities including reference to the evaluation criteria.

## 4.3 Consider using rotating modules for sections of the questionnaire

To provide greater flexibility and help provide continued evidence for the widest possible range of policies within a fixed budget DCMS is considering the use of rotating survey modules. This would allow groups of questions to be included in the survey on a less regular basis (e.g. every three years) or questions to be included for just one survey year.

Generally questions included in the rotating modules will be those which are not high enough priority to make it into the survey every year, but there may also be some questions which would be high priority, but do not require annual data collection.

DCMS proposes a rotating module made up of three blocks, so each question would be asked for a period of one year in every three years, with potential for one or two questions to be added as a one off in a single year.

**Questions**

6. Do you agree with the proposal to include a rotating module to allow a greater range of survey content?

7. Do you agree with the frequency of rotating modules (i.e. every three years)?

8. Could any of your priority topics/questions be adequately covered by inclusion in the survey one in every three years?

## 4.4 Sample size

## It is the view of DCMS that a sample size of approximately10,000 adults and 2,500 children (face to face) is the smallest sample size to allow for robust analysis and adequate confidence in comparison of changes over time. However, as cost savings will need to be made DCMS would welcome views on whether users would find a smaller sample size sufficient for their purposes.

**Questions**

9. Would a smaller sample size for Taking Part be sufficient for your analysis or planned analysis?

## 4.5 Online data collection, with the potential to report at a more local level

DCMS is considering how online data collection could complement the face to face method of data collection in order to make efficiency savings and potentially increase the sample size, meaning that DCMS could report participation at a more localised level. DCMS propose a pilot for testing the use of online data collection for the Taking Part survey.

Online data collection is expected to realise substantial savings, however, there are likely to be challenges in maintaining quality around response rates, length of an internet questionnaire, coverage (e.g. non-internet households) and comparability with face-to-face data. Whether online data collection is suitable and how far it can be used will depend on the quality of the results from the pilot. Any data collection method used for the Taking Part survey should always meet [National Statistics standards.](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/)

**Questions**

10. Do you agree that DCMS should investigate online data collection?

11. Would you be willing to compromise some quality of the survey in order to report at a local level or do you think it is better to keep the quality of the survey and continue with face to face interviews?

## 4.6 Frequency of longitudinal questions

## Currently participants in the longitudinal element of the survey are revisited each year until they drop out of the survey (through a change in contact details or refusal). A cost saving (and increase in precision of cross sectional data) could be made if re-contacts with the longitudinal sample were reduced e.g. after the first three years household are only visited every four or five years, or further longitudinal interviews were discontinued.

**Questions**

12. Do you agree with proposals to revisit the longitudinal sample less frequently?

13. Do you think the longitudinal element of the survey could be dropped for future survey respondents (those already in the longitudinal sample would continue to be included)?

## 4.7 Data linking and use of administrative data

## Government is now making more use of administrative data for statistical purposes. It often has benefits in terms of the coverage of data and cost of data collection, but can have limited flexibility. Additional value can be gained from survey data through linking with administrative or other sources of data, providing a good balance between cost of data collection and flexibility in what can be included providing a wealth of potential for new analysis.

## DCMS are investigating the potential to link survey data to administrative data e.g. on health and education, subject to appropriate permissions.

**Questions**

14. Do you agree with DCMS plans to link survey and administrative data?

15. Are you aware of any administrative or other data sources which might reduce the need for any questions in Taking Part

a) as a standalone data source?

b) as a result of data linking?

## 4.8 Analysis and dissemination

## DCMS produce regular National Statistics Publications based on Taking Part (currently annual and six monthly). Data are also available through the UK Data Service[[3]](#footnote-3). In addition there are some ad hoc research reports done by a range of organisations. DCMS would welcome views on users’ priorities for analysis of Taking Part data and any gaps in the current outputs as well as view on how to improve dissemination of data and/or results.

**Questions**

16. Please provide details of your priorities for DCMS’ future analysis of Taking Part data?

17. Do you have any feedback on the current format of Taking Part reports?

18. Are there other ways you would prefer to see the data or results from Taking Part disseminated?

# **5 Questions**

DCMS welcomes views on the following consultation questions. Please provide reasons for your responses wherever possible.

|  |
| --- |
| **Consultation Question**  |
|  | 1) | Which topics in the current survey are most important?  |
| **Consultation Question**  |
|  | 2) | Are there any gaps in the topics covered in the current survey?  |
| **Consultation Question**  |
|  | 3) | Are there any areas which you feel can be dropped from Taking Part because a) the data are available elsewhere? b) the data are no longer relevant?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 4) | Are there any areas which would benefit from harmonising questions with other surveys? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 5) | If you have views on questions in the current survey which should be kept or new questions which should be added please provide details of your priorities including reference to the evaluation criteria. |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 6) | Do you agree with the proposal to include a rotating module to allow a greater range of survey content?  |
| **Consultation Question?** |
|  | 7) | Do you agree with the frequency of rotating modules (i.e. every three years) |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 8) | Could any of your priority topics/questions be adequately covered by inclusion in the survey one in every three years?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 9) | Would a smaller sample size for Taking Part be sufficient for your analysis or planned analysis?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 10) | Do you agree that DCMS should investigate online data collection?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 11) | Would you be willing to compromise some quality of the survey in order to report at a local level or do you think it is better to keep the quality of the survey and continue with face to face interviews?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 12) | Do you agree with proposals to revisit the longitudinal sample less frequently?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 13) | Do you think the longitudinal element of the survey could be dropped for future survey respondents (those already in the longitudinal sample would continue to be included)?  |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 14) | Do you agree with DCMS plans to link survey and administrative data? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 15) | Are you aware of any administrative or other data sources which might reduce the need for any questions in Taking Parta) as a standalone data source?b) as a result of data linking? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 16) | Please provide details of your priorities for DCMS’ future analysis of Taking Part data? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 17) | Do you have any feedback on the current format of Taking Part reports? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 18) | Are there other ways you would prefer to see the data or results from Taking Part disseminated? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 19) | Do you have any other comments on the proposals? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 20) | How often do you use Taking Part? |
| **Consultation Question** |
|  | 21) | Do you have any other comments on the proposals? |

# **6 Next steps**

Responses to this request for user input should be submitted by 16 October 2015. The responses will then be collated and considered by the co-funders of Taking Part. A summary of responses to this request for user input and planned next steps will be published in late 2016. This will include details of changes planned for the 2016/17 survey year and beyond. Any new survey questions will then be subject to testing following which the questionnaire for 2016/17 will be finalised. Time scales for any other developments will be provided in the response published in late 2016.

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Annex A: Questions to be kept in the survey (outside scope of review)

|  |
| --- |
| **Questions to be kept in the Taking Part survey** |
| SECTOR | VARIABLE CODE | QUESTION | OPTIONS |
| **ARTS PARTICIPATION SCREENER AND FREQUENCIES** | **{ARTP1 to ARTP26}** | In the last 12 months, have you done any of these activities? | (See full questionnaire for list of activities) |
| **{ARTP1A to ARTP25F}** | In the last 12 months, have you done this ….? | 1. In your own-time2. For paid work3. For academic study4. As part of voluntary work5. For some other reason-1. Don’t know |
| **{APFRQ1 to APFRQ27}** | How often in the last 12 months have you done this…? | 1. At least once a week2. Less often that once a week but at least once a month3. Less often than once a month but at least 3 or 4 times a year4. Twice in the last 12 months5. Once in the last 12 months-1. Don’t know |
| **ARTS ATTENDANCE SCREENER AND FREQUENCIES** | **{ARTA1 to ARTA22}** | In the last 12 months, have you been to any of these events? | (See full questionnaire for list of activities) |
| **{ARTA1A to ARTA21F}** | In the last 12 months, have you been to any of these events ….? | 1. In your own-time2. For paid work3. For academic study4. As part of voluntary work5. For some other reason-1. Don’t know |
| **{AAFREQ1 to AAFREQ21}** | How often in the last 12 months have you been to this type of event…? | 1. At least once a week2. Less often that once a week but at least once a month3. Less often than once a month but at least 3 or 4 times a year4. Twice in the last 12 months5. Once in the last 12 months-1. Don’t know |
| **LIBRARIES SCREENER AND FREQUENCIES** | **{SCLIBRARY}** | During the last 12 months, have you used a public library service at least once? | 1. Yes2. No -1. Don’t know |
| **{LIBRARYA to LIBRARYF}** | In the last 12 months, have you used a public library service ….? | 1. In your own-time2. For paid work3. For academic study4. As part of voluntary work5. For some other reason-1. Don’t know |
| **{LIBFREQ}** | How often in the last 12 months have you used a public library service…? | 1. At least once a week2. Less often that once a week but at least once a month3. Less often than once a month but at least 3 or 4 times a year4. Twice in the last 12 months5. Once in the last 12 months-1. Don’t know |
| **HERITAGE SCREENER AND FREQUENCIES** | **{SCHER1 TO SCHER9}** | In the last 12 months have you visited any of these places?  | 1. A city or town with historic character2. A historic building open to the public (non-religious)3. A historic park or garden open to the public4. A place connected with industrial history (e.g. an old factory, dockyard or mine) or historic transport system (e.g. an old ship or railway)5. A historic place of worship attended as a visitor (not to worship)6. A monument such as a castle, fort or ruin7. A site of archaeological interest (i.e. Roman villa, ancient burial site)8. A site connected with sports heritage (e.g. Wimbledon) (not visited for the purposes of watching sport)9. None of these |
| **{HERITAGEA to HERITAGEF}** | In the last 12 months, have you been to any of these places..…. | 1. In your own-time2. For paid work3. For academic study4. As part of voluntary work5. For some other reason-1. Don’t know |
| **{HERFREQ}** | How often in the last 12 months have you been to places like this…? | 1. At least once a week2. Less often that once a week but at least once a month3. Less often than once a month but at least 3 or 4 times a year4. Twice in the last 12 months5. Once in the last 12 months-1. Don’t know |
| **MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES SCREENER AND FREQUENCIES** | **{SCMUSEUM}** | During the last 12 months, have you attended a museum or gallery at least once? | 1. Yes2. No -1. Don’t know |
| **{MUSEUMA to MUSEUMF}** | In the last 12 months, have you attended a museum or gallery..….? | 1. In your own-time2. For paid work3. For academic study4. As part of voluntary work5. For some other reason-1. Don’t know |
| **{MUSFREQ}** | How often in the last 12 months have you been to a museum or gallery…? | 1. At least once a week2. Less often that once a week but at least once a month3. Less often than once a month but at least 3 or 4 times a year4. Twice in the last 12 months5. Once in the last 12 months-1. Don’t know  |
| **VOLUNTEERING** | **{GRPINT}**  | In the last 12 months, have you been involved with any groups of people who get together to do an activity or to talk about things? These could include evening classes, support groups, slimming clubs, keep-fit classes, pub teams and so on. | 1. Yes2. No -1. Don’t know |
| **CHARITABLE GIVING**  | **{GIVETY1-17}** | In the last 12 months, have you donated any money in any of the following ways?  | (See full questionnaire for response options) |

1. Measurement of cultural engagement includes the arts, heritage, museums and galleries, libraries, and archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Copies of all Taking Part questionnaires can be found here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/questionnaires-from-taking-part](%20https%3A/www.gov.uk/government/collections/questionnaires-from-taking-part) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7710 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)